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*** * * *Corrected version* * * ***

Package aims to stop meth abuse

LANSING — Sen. Alan Cropsey, R-DeWitt, and other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday unanimously recommended to the full chamber approval of a package of bills that aims to control methamphetamine abuse.

The package of bills will increase fines and penalties for persons who operate a ‘meth’ lab or are found stealing chemicals or accumulating chemicals for the purpose of making methamphetamine.

“This deadly scourge is working its way across Michigan with literally hundreds of drug busts every year,” Cropsey said. “This drug and this addiction are unlike any other drug addiction out there. I’m glad we’re giving law enforcement officials the tools needed to stop this drug.”

The committee hearing included testimony from Eaton County Sheriff Rick Jones.

“In my over 30 years of law enforcement experience, methamphetamine is the most addictive, nasty drug I’ve seen,” Jones said. “This package is a good start against drugs, and I commend this committee and encourage you to move forward.”

The Committee unanimously voted to send on the package of bills would include methamphetamine and ecstasy with heroine and cocaine delivery/ possession offenses so the punishment will increase with the amount of meth delivered or possessed. It also would make the possession or transport of anhydrous ammonia (an ingredient in meth) in a non-approved container a five-year felony and increase penalties for the theft of anhydrous ammonia.

Testifying in support of the legislation were 56th District Judge Harvey Hoffman and Eaton County Prosecutor Jeff Sauter.